

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-27 (canceled).

Claim 28 (canceled).

Claim 29 (currently amended). ~~The surgical instrument of claim 28~~ A surgical instrument for use in corneal reconstruction, comprising:

a connecting end; and

a hollow spatula-like member having a proximal end supported by said connecting end and a distal tip opposite said proximal end, said spatula-like member including an arcuate distal section formed in a plane along a curvature, and further including a fluid passageway therein, said fluid passageway being in fluid communication with a fluid source, with one side of said spatula-like member further including a plurality of apertures wherefrom fluid from said fluid source may be ejected,

wherein said spatula-like member has a trapezoidal cross-sectional shape, and

wherein said surgical instrument is adapted to separate corneal surface epithelium from the underlying cornea.

Claim 30 (canceled).

Claim 31 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein said distal tip includes an aperture whereby fluid from said fluid source may be ejected onto the cornea.

Claim 32 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein said fluid source is a syringe connected to said connecting end.

Claim 33 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein said spatula-like member has a height of no greater than about 0.5 millimeters.

Claim 34 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein said distal section has a length of about 10 millimeters to about 15 millimeters.

Claims 35-38 (canceled).

Claim 39 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein there are 15 to 25 apertures.

Claim 40 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein the diameter of said apertures ranges from about 0.05 millimeters to 0.10 millimeters.

Claim 41 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein the apertures are evenly spaced about 0.4 millimeters apart along said side.

Claim 42 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein said distal section curvature has a radius of curvature between about 8 millimeters and about 12 millimeters.

Claim 43 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein said proximal end is oriented with respect to the distal section to form a vertical angle of about 40 degrees to about 60 degrees.

Claim 44 (previously presented). The surgical instrument of claim 29 wherein said trapezoidal spatula-like member has a top side and an opposing contact side, said top side having a width of about 0.5 millimeters to about 1.0 millimeters, and said contact side having a width of about 0.75 millimeters to about 1.25 millimeters.

Claim 45 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein said distal section curvature has a radius of curvature between about 8 millimeters and about 11.5 millimeters.